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## Remarks of Rep. Billy Williamson Before the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System

University of Texas at Tyler

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The State of Texas  
House of Representatives  
Austin, Texas

BILLY WILLIAMSON  
PEOPLES NATIONAL BANK BLDG.  
TYLER, TEXAS 75701  
AREA CODE 214 LY 4-3141

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AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711  
AREA CODE 512 GR 5-3640

June 24, 1968

COMMITTEES:

VICE-CHAIRMAN:  
REPRESENTATION BEFORE THE  
LEGISLATURE

MEMBER:  
JUDICIARY  
OIL, GAS AND MINING  
MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL  
RETARDATION  
INSURANCE

Mr. Freeman Carney  
Executive Vice President  
Tyler Chamber of Commerce  
301 North Broadway  
Tyler, Texas 75701

Dear Freeman:

It was indeed a pleasure to have you here in Austin even if it was just for a short while. Your presence here made an indelible impression on the Coordinating Board and I feel it will be very important in determining a favorable outcome of higher education in the heart of East Texas.

Cordially,

Billy Williamson

BW:fw  
Enclosure

*Freeman: If for any reason you need or would like to have any extra copies of this, please advise.*

*I am getting more information on the other counties now. Thank again.*



Remarks of Representative Williamson before the Coordinating Board, Texas Colleges and University System, Austin, Texas, June 21, 1968.

Mr. Chairman and other honorable members of the Coordinating Board. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss with you one of the most complex problems confronting policy makers of today, that of planning for education tomorrow. Dr. Williams and his staff are to be complimented on their approach and criteria used in planning today for education tomorrow.

I am before you today to request that you have seven two-year colleges instead of six. I am advised that if the same criteria used in the selection of the six proposed locations were followed for a seventh that the seventh location would be that of Tyler. Before saying any more about Tyler, I must of necessity mention East Texas, for you cannot talk of one without talking of the other. In the event that you are not familiar with East Texas, let me very briefly give you a bit of background. In the early days of Texas, the South, the West, and North Texas were primarily divided into large tracts of land. With rainfall and other natural conditions in those areas, it took more acres to the cow and in Central Texas and its fertile blackland, it was more suitable to large cotton farming operations but in East Texas with the rainfall that we have, thirty acres of corn and ten acres of cotton for cash was sufficient to



support a family. This meant many small farms and close together. Very soon in the history of East Texas many many small communities developed. Unlike the other areas of the State, East Texas has numerous small communities in very close proximity to each other. As agriculture gave way to modern industry and as industry came to East Texas for her unlimited supply of water, economical fuel, and large labor market, East Texas grew and Gentlemen, East Texas is still growing. Industry is still coming and is still coming for the same reason. Tyler is located in the heart of East Texas. As you know the Coordinating Board has divided the thirty-eight counties of Northeast Texas into eight Junior College districts. Ten percent of the entire population of the State of Texas is within eighty-five miles of Tyler. Within the eight districts (namely Districts No. 33, 35, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, and 52) there is a population of 1,040,704. This has increased since 1960 by a rate of 9.1%. Smith County's population today is more than 100 thousand and has one of the highest growth rates in this State, currently in excess of 2%.

While the college age population for 1970 is forecasted to be 14,402 for Tyler alone, we must not lose sight of the fact that Tyler serves more than just Smith County. Tyler serves East Texas. More than just a geographical hub, Tyler is a center for wholesaling,



an industrial center, a transportation center, a cultural center, a medical center, but even with all of this and Tyler's unparalleled enjoyment of leadership in every field, Tyler is a "limited" educational center. Tyler Junior College, with its outstanding academic achievement shows that we are not limited in quality in our education but limited only to two years. The East Texas School of Nursing, although serving all of East Texas again is not limited in quality but limited in the duration of this splendid education. Necessity now demands that the limitations be removed from the field of education in the heart of East Texas. Necessity now demands that Tyler become the educational center that East Texas needs and expects not because of what we can get but because of what we can give. Tyler asks not to be a recipient but to be a giver.

The figures and statistics available to you will clearly show that the students from the various locations in the State attend colleges throughout the State. The location of a two year Senior College in Tyler would not be in competition with either of the two four-year colleges presently within the thirty-eight county area. These colleges are East Texas State, located approximately 90 miles from Tyler, with a proposed maximum enrollment of 12,800 students by 1972 and Stephen F. Austin, located 80 miles away with a proposed maximum enrollment of the same figure. I



would be the last to ask for a school at the expense of either of these colleges, but the population we have plus what we are projecting to have, not by my figures but by yours, by the year 1980 will be able to fill to proposed maximum capacity all of one of these colleges and half of the other colleges with students from the City of Tyler alone without admitting one single student from the balance of Smith County or one single student from the balance of the other thirty-seven counties within the eight District area.

Tyler Junior College with 3,102 students has one of the largest enrollments of any Junior College in the State. Twenty-six miles away at Kilgore Junior College there are 2,406 students and 36 miles away at Athens, the Henderson County Junior College 1,339. In other words we have within a 36 mile radius of Tyler approximately 7,000 students in public Junior Colleges and within the same perimeter additional Junior College students making today's total approximately 10,000. And ten years from today that figure will be 15,000 (from the Henderson, Tyler, Kilgore Junior College Districts and enrollment of the private Junior Colleges within the area.) This is the need and this is our problem in East Texas of planning for education for tomorrow.

Tyler will not only open up her arms, her heart, but her resources. You have only to let us know what your requirements will be and Tyler will do her part. Tyler already has more money per capita invested



in medical facilities than any other area of this State and is the undisputed medical center of the eight District area. These facilities are available to you for the asking. Personally, Gentlemen, when I view the vast medical facilities that we have there at Tyler, I cannot help but feel that there is to some degree a waste that these facilities are not being better utilized in at least a limited program of medical instruction and here again, Gentlemen, we are not asking, we are offering. We are offering to any degree the utilization of our medical facilities and splendid array of medical talent.

In conclusion we ask you for the opportunity to give, to give education to our young people, to give the opportunity of education to the entire community of East Texas to the same extent that we now serve East Texas and all other areas. We of Tyler and East Texas assure you that we want to assist you in equipping our young people so that after us they can build a better Texas for a better tomorrow.